

LMXJVSD by Marina González Guerreiro (Pols 17 February - 19 June 2020)
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LMXJVSD by Marina González Guerreiro begins with the past as a mirror. A mirror in which someone adjusts their hair, braiding some lock and putting a pink thread inside another. Decorating the hairstyle with shiny blue plastic beads. They adjust everything with a few coloured hair clips before leaving the house. And so the exhibition begins with the reflection of a childish world and an ancient joy tangled in hair.

On one of the walls hang small drawings with **LABYRINTHS**, sketches of invented games without rules or objectives. LMXJVSD has the narrative of the maze, its rhythm and its cadence. It does not have a sequence, on the contrary, there are constant crossings of lines, it puts you in a lost time parallel to what happens spatially when you traverse the labyrinth, when you go from one side to the other, you turn, you tour, and arrive at the center which is not the end but the place from where it is hardest to get out. This is the safest place and it has

swing flowers music

but the center of the labyrinth resembles death. The labyrinths are tombs of the hybrid, of the extravagance that disturbs and of the half-men that are also half-bull that should be set aside. The labyrinth can make something disappear without destroying it and that is why Marina's exhibition updates a latent fantasy: it mobilises an imaginary that is confined but also protected, from the dangers that are outside and from the hungry order that wants to eat it. The center of the labyrinth is a tomb with life inside that flows stitch by stitch knot by knot bead by bead.

Teresa de Lauretis explains that narration in literature has the function of maintaining the stability of meaning, of fixing the chains of signifiers to give them meaning and to prevent the misinterpretation that occurs at the figurative and rhetorical layer of language. There is precisely a whole demonstration of visual rhetoric in LMXJVSD that makes it difficult to read; there are **WINGED HAIR JAWS** that reappear throughout the exhibition and that could be an allegory, an ornament and a hair jaw and a butterfly and a fairy too.

Craig Owens explains that allegory implies the superposition of meanings and the existence of two contents in the same form, being this quality the one that lead to the condemnation of its use by the visual arts of modernity. Owens justified the relevance of a postmodern return to allegory understanding it as an interpretative tool, and not as a frivolous and ornamental concession: it allows to read one text through another "however fragmentary, intermittent or chaotic their relationship may be".

Marina participates in a new turn to allegory that, as Owens would say, consists of confiscating images and signs

spiral snail necklace flute flower

to further inflate their meanings, to slide them with a practice that, despite being very different to the postmodern one to which Owens refers, shares some features with it. For example, its synthetic character, its site-specificity, its hybridization and its symbolic accumulation. But to Marina's allegorical discursiveness is added the weight of the form, the frivolous and ornamental impulse. Her practice is marked by different materials and an alternative imaginary, intimate, infantile and girly, that make the use of allegory a direct manifestation of a particular way of being in the world. In this sense, the return to allegory that Jose Luis Brea examines together with the return of the Baroque links it precisely with that gliding and metamorphosis of the world, and the intention, not to represent it, but to participate in its occurrence.

To talk about a return of the Baroque and about the **METAMORPHOSES** of LMXJVSD, I am going to talk about Marina together with Marosa di Giorgio. Marina's plastic work shares with Marosa's writing a certain survival or updating of baroque and surreal impulses and aesthetics¹. Both

¹ Manuel Segade's conference at the XXV Jornadas de Estudio de la Imagen of CA2M (Mundanizar el Mundo, 18 - 20 October 2018) invited to think about the material artistic culture of the Spanish context departing from this idea of the return and survival of certain Baroque and Neo-

movements, as Mary Ann Caws points out, show a fascination for the complex, the theatrical, the metaphorical, the surface, the play between form and chaos or transparency and darkness. It is the transformation and the constant metamorphoses that occur in the prolific fantastic and natural spaces articulated in Marina's and Marosa's works that unites them in relation to a queer fertility.

Marosa's poems and prose bring forth enchanted worlds where more things are possible and where vital universes intensify. As in Marina's work, in Marosa's the irruption of the extraordinary occurs within the ordinary syntax. There is excess, there is a waste of language and symbols, but it is an exercise of proliferation that departs from the known, or in the case of Marina, from the intimate and domestic. A tree

was slowly becoming of strings with ruby; stiff, barely alive, little birds appeared, that hardly shook their heads and were of all colors, each more brilliant than the other. And between them some straight rods of violet blue with lilac balloons.

And Marina hangs small gemstones like fruits on the wire branches that bloom in a blue vase and a little ceramic bird sounds like an instrument when water is put into its gut.

Marosa tells her that there are

almonds that, when opened, showed an insect or a small virgin, in pale turquoise or pure gold. Papers in fiery, crackling colors that looked like fire, but suddenly melted like ice.

And Marina knows this because there is a comb-shaped insect climbing the wall and another gummy animal inside a plastic fish bowl, and there are gold and turquoise snowballs, and colored papers with embroidered messages inconsistent like wax on LMXJVSD. These grotesque children, this queer fertility of mutations between humans, animals and plants, bring with them more worlds establishing a non-normal relation with the production and consumption of images, objects and materials.

Among so much birth and so much absolute fecundity pieces of death appear in life. Marina shows a **VANITAS** with decomposing fruit in the foreground and a pastel altar in the background. There is also the flower carpet that took so long to compose and that is destroyed by the first step. The baroque memento mori is also strongly present on the calendars on the floor, some annotated and others turned into paper figurines, all bearing the mark of the insignificant actions of the living. The baroque aesthetic (and also the surrealist) indulges in the recognition of the ephemerality of time and the inevitability of death. For Christine Buci-Glucksmann this makes baroque culture a culture of melancholy.

The interior tone and the recurring temporality of the actions in Marina's work also bring melancholy. If we add to this the emotive sensible memory of childhood and its activities, we find in LMXJVSD a melancholic look at childhood happiness that is constantly reincorporated in a suspended present.

toys jewel cases chalk hopscotch rattle candies

All the attributes of the girl's childhood appear in the timeless narrative of the labyrinth which keeps in its center that which we cannot or do not want to get rid of, for example, a minotaur. Marina does not let go of these attributes, and this rejection becomes an interiority from which she builds a childhood in ruins with imperfect fragments that always frustrate the possibility of understanding the full meaning and reconstructing the original scene: ruin is the melancholic and allegorical emblem par excellence.

At the back of the space there is a **CHILD'S PAINTING WITH A SWING** from many years ago.

The infantile in Marina's work subverts the common value of objects and the ordinary processes of knowledge. The queerness of childhood and of childish adults proposes models of inhabiting the world based on precariousness, the sensible and the fantastic². Against the normative convention

Baroque features. Marina's work, together with that of other national and international young artists — who share an intimate, ornamental, domestic way of doing things, that deals with fantastic, violent and infantile themes, and that has a strong identitarian mark— can be inscribed in this return and update both from a thematic and a formal perspective.

² The link established between the potential of queer childhood and the work of Marina Gonzalez Guerreiro is supported by the work carried out in the study group *CuteWithoutTheE* together with

of growing by adding years and centimeters up and forward, Kathryn Bond Stockton identifies twisted and lateral ways of growing sideways that find their visual parallel in Marina's work and that involve the assumption of fictitious ways of unfolding in the world (an impulse based on metaphors and the proliferation of associations proposed by the fantastic and visual rhetoric of LMXJVSD).

Kitchens and other feminized or infantilized interiors are the places of origin of tales and fables. Right there where the tedious and repetitive childish activities occur: peeling peas, ordering vegetables or colored pencils. Fantasy does not spring from the trip to some strange and exciting place but from the boredom of the domestic, from the endless desire to travel the labyrinth from the inside out without being able or wanting to move from its center-grave. Marina repeats these minimal activities with her beaded bracelets, candy necklaces, or embroidered scarves. Her fantasy lives from an a-functional production and reproduction. In the repetitive childhood Marina finds a melancholic refuge where outside time does not affect but in LMXJVSD death also has airs of abundance.

The closure of LMXJVSD is a padlock attached to a rusty gate. Like a gauze that comes floating, a butterfly with little red wings sits on the fence, and almost immediately a girl comes following with her hair very adorned with colored little hair jaws and shiny braids. And she comes all heated and with flushed cheeks, for she has been following the butterfly for a long time and from afar. *And others identical, arose from many sides; from among the bouquets, a whole landscape of girls unfolded before me.*

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Blanca Ulloa, Alberto Vallejo and Leticia Ybarra. The group sessions have articulated around three fundamental texts. First, Cynthia Francisca's essay "The queer child in the literature of Beauty and Happiness. Temporality, crisis and politics" (2015) has been especially relevant when questioning the image of the child proposed by Lee Edelman and in finding the possibility of universes governed by pleasure and unproductiveness and not by the accumulation of social and cultural capital. Second, "The Storyteller: Reflections on the Works of Nikolai Leskov" (1936) and "Old Forgotten Children's Books" (1928) by Walter Benjamin inaugurate the possibility of linking children's fantastic mechanisms with the domestic and a non-functional mode of production.